Metallica vs. Napster

What was the issue?

The heavy metal band Metallica sued the music sharing site Napster for supposedly letting their users trade Metallica’s copyrighted songs as piracy through their service. They sued on 3 different laws. The first one being copyright infringement, the second being unlawful use of digital audio interface device, and the third was the Racketeering Influenced & Corrupt Organizations Act. The reason they sued was because Metallica was losing money because so many people didn’t want to actually pay for the songs when they could just “steal” it for free off the internet.

What was the result of the court case?

Napster ended up having to put a filter on the program to stop copyrighted songs from being traded within 72 hours or the program would need to be shut down. After the Metallica case several other artists filed similar suits including Dr. Dre which resulted in 230,142 Napster accounts being shut down and300,000 people being banned from the site. Also, Napster was ordered to pay Metallica $10 million in damages at the rate of $100,000 a song.

Do I agree with the outcome?

Yes, I do. If I were a famous artists trying to make money off my songs I would be so rattled to find out people were sharing and illegally downloading my copyrighted songs for free. I think $100,000 per song is a lot of money but I guess if that is how much the band would have made if the listeners would of bought the song then it makes sense.

How did Napster affect today’s music industry?

More artists are more careful. They have filters on their songs and release them to be sold on websites so it’s harder to steal, pirate, and trade. They sell them to websites like the Vevo account on YouTube, iTunes, and other legitimate sites so that the fans can hear the music but the bands are also making a profit. By; Hanna